DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 363 751 CE 064 992

AUTHOR Pierce, W. Lee; And Others
TITLE Professionalization of Adult Basic Education.
INSTITUTION University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg.
PUB DATE [Jul 93]
NOTE 35p.; For related documents, see CE 064 991-994. A product of the Adult Education Program Development Project.
PUB TYPE Information Analyses (070)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Adult Basic Education; *Adult Educators; Educational Quality; Inservice Teacher Education; *Professional Recognition; Standards; State Programs; *Statewide Planning; *Teacher Certification
IDENTIFIERS *Mississippi; *Professionalization

ABSTRACT

Adult basic education is critical to the future of the state of Mississippi. However, the state contributes only 8.5 percent of funding for adult education (the remaining 91.5 percent comes from federal sources) to serve less than 2.3 percent of the eligible population. Furthermore, Mississippi loses up to one-third of its potential high school graduates between grades 9 and 12. A curriculum for the education of adults who did not receive public school education is needed. Meanwhile, adult basic education is striving for recognition as a profession but is suffering from an identity crisis. Foster (1988) lists possible remedies to facilitate the recovery of adult literacy. These treatments are ensconced in quality standards grouped into four categories: (1) what should be taught; (2) who will be taught; (3) methods and techniques; and (4) assessment and evaluation. Foster has also proposed a blueprint for action that includes the following: exposure of adult literacy staff to state-of-the-art knowledge, staff accountability for meeting quality standards, specific staff training programs, competitive compensation levels, and certification. (Contains 18 references and an appendix detailing years of formal schooling completed, by county.) (YLB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 363 751

Professionalization of Adult Basic Education

Prepared by the Adult Education Program Development Project
The University of Southern Mississippi

W. Lee Pierce, Project Director
Lin Harper, Project Coordinator
Robert Grubb
Virginia Hemby
Allen Hull

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

W. Lee Pierce

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)"

CE 064 992

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Adult Education in Mississippi

As Mississippi rapidly approaches the twenty-first century, she should be prepared to enter the most competitive business climate within the last fifty years. She should further be prepared to develop her most precious business asset--her workforce. As rapidly as technology and new economic opportunities develop and change, so too does the training necessary for the workforce to remain abreast of these innovations. To ignore or to remain steadfast in the belief that education and learning cease at the tender age of 18 is ludicrous. Eduard Lindeman, often referred to as the father of modern adult education, as early as 1926 espoused the philosophy that learning is not coterminous with completion of a high school education; instead, it is a lifelong process (The Meaning of Adult Education, 1926).

We are throwing away our most precious commodity--our workers--by denying them an opportunity to compete in the workforce merely because they lack the fundamental skills so vital to accessing the job market. If Mississippi is to grow and thrive and prosper, she cannot ignore her sacred obligation to educate her citizens--regardless of age, race, and sex--for every individual is an integral part of the whole, a micro Mississippi.

Statistics and Demographics for Mississippi

William Freund, chief economist emeritus, New York Stock Exchange, in a speech before the thirtieth annual Deposit Guaranty Symposium on January 13, 1993, in Jackson, Mississippi, made several predictions concerning the future of the economy. Among those predictions was the unlikelihood that President Clinton's campaign pledge of a middle-class tax break will become a reality. The post-recession recovery will produce economic growth in the three percent to four percent range; that is lower than the average six percent following every recession since World War II. He further stated that the United States can maintain a first-rate economy only so long as we have a first-rate education system. This position was buttressed by David M. Ratcliffe, CEO of the Gulfport-based Mississippi Power Company. Mr. Ratcliffe posited that "the most basic ingredient in any economy is educated, productive people." Ratcliffe further stated inequity in school district funding must be addressed because "you are not likely to find excellent schools in an impoverished community." A logical extension of this statement is that you are not likely to find excellent economic growth in an educationally impoverished state. According to Ratcliffe, school

districts spending more money per pupil have far greater graduation rates and fewer drop-outs, surveys show ("Economy Tied," 1993).

According to the 1990 edition of The Adult Education Program Annual Report compiled by the National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium (NAEPDC), Mississippi's entire allotment from both federal and state sources totaled $2.1 million, of which the state contributed $179,725 or 8.5%. This funding was utilized to serve 18,957 persons out of a total eligible population of 823,726. This represents less than 2.3% of the eligible population being served at a cost of $111.15 per pupil. To place this in perspective, the state of California services 19% of its eligible population at a cost of $212.25. The message sent to those people ill-fated enough not to have acquired literacy skills between the ages of 5 and 18 is that the timeframe for society's obligation to educate its populous is past, and they unfortunately have missed their window of opportunity. How do Mississippi and the other southeastern states compare to the example set by California?

STATE	ELIGIBLE POPULATION	COST PER ELIGIBLE POPULATION	POPULATION SERVED	COST PER POPULATION SERVED	FEDERAL ALLOTMENTS	STATE/ LOCAL ALLOTMENTS	TOTAL ALLOTMENTS
Alabama	1,259,800	$4.42	40,177 (3.2%)	$138.73	$2,802,200	$2,771,481	$5,573,681
California	5,359,094	$40.45	1,021,227 (19%)	$212.25	11,953,705	204,798,040	216,751,745
Florida	2,682,496	$20.89	419,429 (15.6%)	$133.62	5,873,650	50,171,357	56,045,007
Georgia	1,766,608	$3.63	69,580 (3.9%)	$92.27	3,818,874	2,601,314	6,420,188
Louisiana	1,290,389	$6.88	40,039 (3.0%)	$221.84	2,896,133	5,986,224	8,882,357
Mississippi	***823,726***	***$2.56***	***18,957 (2.3%)***	***$111.15***	***1,927,422***	***179,725***	***2,107,147***
South Carolina	1,047,480	$8.07	81,200 (7.8%)	$104.08	2,376,279	6,075,276	8,451,555
Tennessee	1,516,661	$2.49	41,721 (2.8%)	$90.56	3,317,472	460,853	3,778,325

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Drop-out Rates and Literacy

Mississippi loses up to one-third of its potential high school graduates between the ninth and twelfth grades, thereby forcing them into lives of poverty and underemployment. Nationally, 1991 statistics reveal a 12.5 percent drop-out rate among all races. In 1990-91, according to the U.S. Department of Education, Mississippi had 23,433 public high school graduates (refer to table in Appendix A). In 1991-92, they estimated 22,751 which shows a decline of 18.4 percent. This percentage may be even greater since "adult literacy efforts in the South are hamstrung by a lack of reliable data with which to establish goals or hold individual programs accountable for the progress--or lack of it--made by their adult students. Well constructed, in-depth literacy surveys have never been administered to measure the functional literacy of adults on a state-by-state basis . . . (Southern Regional Literacy Commission, 1990)" (Cosby, et al., 1991, p. 1.2). Traditionally literacy has been construed as "an essential aim of education in the modern world." However, it "is no autonomous, empty skill but depends upon literate culture. . . . Literacy requires the early and continued transmission of specific information" (Cosby, et al., 1991, p. 1.8).

As its primary focus, the federal adult education and literacy program is targeting those participants who a lack high school diploma or its equivalent. This has been selected as the criteria for achievement, since literacy is not a matter of simply being able to read.

According to the U.S. Department of Education (April 1992), 75.6 percent of the national population of 17-year-olds are high school graduates. As research and practice have suggested, "a high school credential serves not only as a benchmark in the educational process but as the vital link to lifelong learning" (p. 1). "There is no doubt that the less schooling people have, the more likely they are to be functionally illiterate. All the surveys agree on this point, even though they differ substantially in their assessments of the overall rate of illiteracy. The recent (1986) Bureau of the Census study, for example, found that fully seventy percent of those classified as illiterate had not completed high school" (Harman, 1987, p. 41). As high school completion is the main focus of the Adult Secondary Education (ASE) program, "dropouts" aged 16 or older who, according to the 1989 Bureau of Census statistics number more than 38 million, are the prime potential beneficiaries of lifelong learning (U.S. Dept. of Education, April 1992).

Public Assistance Demographics

Mississippians in households that receive public assistance function at appreciably lower levels of proficiency than those households which receive no public assistance. Of those households previously mentioned, 49,485 adults are eligible for money payment and Medicaid benefits under Aid to Families with Dependent Children according to the 1990 Mississippi Statistical Abstract. Not only was the state of Mississippi supporting those adults, but it also financed 127,349 children. In order to support this massive load upon the state of Mississippi, the total expenditure for public welfare from July 1, 1988, to June 30, 1989, cost the state $170,367,000.

It is interesting to note that according to the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, in October 1990, approximately 63 percent of high school graduates not enrolled in college were employed; 20 percent were unemployed; and 17 percent were not in the labor force. Only 47 percent of dropouts were employed; 20 percent were unemployed; and 33 percent were not in the labor force. A demographic profile of Mississippians active in the work force shows 29 percent are involved in professional and technical areas; 26 percent are foreman/skilled; 21 percent are unskilled

workers; 17 percent of the labor force is in clerical/sales; and 7 percent in the labor force is listed as "other".

Definitions of Literacy Data

"Demographically, the state is not projected to change significantly through the year 2015. In 2015 Mississippi is expected to have one of the highest concentrations of people under the age of 19 of any state in the nation" (Woods & Poole, 1990, p. A12). Nationally, the highest level or greatest percentage of unemployment is all persons with eight years or less of education in the 16- to 19-year-old age bracket. In Mississippi, according to the 1990 census, 59.7 percent of persons 16 years of age and over will be in the labor force. What is to become of the remaining 40.3 percent of those individuals in this age bracket with neither employment skills nor with adequate literacy skills?

According to the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) Young Adult Study, there are five levels of reading proficiency:

a. "Rudimentary (150)--readers who have acquired rudimentary reading skills and strategies can follow brief written directions . . . . Performance at this level suggests ability to carry out simple, discreet reading tasks.

b. Basic (200)--readers who have learned basic reading comprehension skills and strategies can locate and identify facts from simple informational paragraphs, stories, and news articles . . . . Performance at this level suggests the ability to understand specific or sequentially related information.

c. Intermediate (250)--readers with the ability to use intermediate skills and strategies can search for, locate, and organize the information they find in relatively lengthy passages and can recognize paraphrase of what they have read . . . . Performance at this level suggests the ability to search for specific information, interrelate ideas, and make generalizations.

d. Adept (300)--readers with adept reading comprehension skills and strategies can understand complicated literacy and informational passages including materials about topics they study at school . . . . Performance at this level suggests the ability to find, understand, summarize, and explain relatively complicated information.

e. Advanced (350)--readers who use advanced reading skills and strategies can extend and restructure the ideas presented in

> specialized and complex texts. Examples include scientific materials, literary essays, historical documents, and materials similar to those found in professional and technical working environments . . . . Performance at this level suggests the ability to synthesize and learn from specialized reading materials" (Cosby, et al., 1991, p. 2.3).

"In the NAEP Young Adult Study, subjects were from Mississippi, Oregon, and a national sample of Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) clients as well as persons using the Employment Service. This will enable Mississippi to compare its results with Oregon and those of the national JTPA survey. Since all of these surveys and the 1985 study of young adults use the same scale scoring system, it is possible for Mississippi to compare the relative performance of adults in the state with those of national studies past and future" (Cosby, et al., 1991, p. x).

According to the Mississippi Literacy Assessment (1991), 97.3 percent of whites responded correctly at the most basic 150 level; 80.5 percent of blacks successfully performed the same types of tasks. Tasks breaking the 150 level of proficiency include signing one's name on the social security card, locating the expiration date on a driver's license, and identifying the

correct time of a meeting from a form. At the 250 document level, tasks involve matching information on the basis of two features from documents containing several distractors or plausible answers.

NAEP (READING) SCALE SCORES	SURVEY AVERAGE (%)	MISSISSIPPI AVERAGE (%)
Advanced (350 and above)	20.9	7.3
Intermediate (250 and above)	84.1	65.1
Basic (200 and above)	96.8	90.8
Rudimentary (150 and above)	99.6	98.4

One such task involves locating in a table how soon an employee will be eligible for a particular type of fringe benefit. Another task at about this level involves locating a particular intersection on a street map. At the 250 level where respondents were asked to complete a check given information on a bill, there was a 38.8 percent greater success rate among whites (Cosby, et al., 1991).

"Adults with eight or fewer years of schooling scored considerably lower than those with more schooling. Individuals with 0-8 years of education scored an average of 81 points less on all three scales than high school graduates. Those who had some high school education also scored an average of 36 points lower than high school graduates. . . . There is a

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

significant variation between the white and black population in Mississippi even when their educational attainment levels are similar. The white population scored consistently higher than the black population. White adults with eight or fewer years of schooling scored 54 points higher than blacks with the same educational level. This pattern continues at the other educational levels. In the categories of those with some high school, those with high school diplomas and those with some college, whites scored 32 to 39 points higher than blacks (Cosby, et al., 1991, pp. 4.8-4.10).

"By 2015, 38.8 percent of the population is expected to be Black, up from 35.6 percent in 1990, remaining the second highest percentage of any state" (Woods & Poole, p. A12). With the fall of the Berlin wall and the congressional commitment to downsizing the military, a substantial portion of these individuals will remain in the civilian sector with little possibility of employment.

Where is Mississippi Going?

In order to compete in the 21st century, Mississippi needs to look to her strengths. Traditionally, Mississippi has relied upon agriculture and, later, manufacturing to support her constituents. According to Woods & Poole, economic consultants retained for purposes of composing the 1991

State Profile, the Mississippi economy has a relatively strong manufacturing sector which provides the underpinning for stable job growth. Manufacturing employment in Mississippi increased by 63,000 jobs between 1970 and 1990. The diversity of the Mississippi manufacturing base is a large part of its strength. Mississippi manufacturing employment is forecast to increase by 57,000 jobs between 1990 and 2015. However, the "non-basic" sectors of the Mississippi economy are expected to generate the most employment growth over the next quarter century; these include jobs in finance, insurance, and real estate. Similarly, service employment is projected to rise a net gain of 21,800 service jobs statewide. Retail and wholesale trade sectors are also forecast to create 31,500 new jobs in the state by 2015. This shift in employment necessitates an increase in basic education skills as well as laying a platform for future growth and training in all areas.

According to Woods & Poole, 1991 State Profile, "The population of Mississippi is expected to grow slowly but steadily over the next 25 years. The total population of the state is projected to rise from 2.58 million in 1990 to 2.83 million in 2015. This growth reflects a population increase of 0.37 percent a year on the average, well below expected U.S. population growth of 0.89 percent a year." Therefore, it is in the best interests of the

state of Mississippi to provide a platform for this controlled population growth and limited economic expansion opportunity. This may be, by necessity, most readily addressed by an educated workforce. It is a matter of economic survival that dictates "the biggest bang for the buck." In other words, a well-trained workforce draws the attention of a variety of business and manufacturing interests.

It is imperative that Mississippi develop a curriculum for the education of those misplaced individuals who were unfortunate enough not to have received a public school education. Not only is this a moral imperative, but it is also an economic necessity. If Mississippi is to survive and prosper in the new century, the onus of responsibility lies not only with her professional education staff to develop the guidelines but also with her legislators to provide the funding so vital for the implementation of these guidelines.

Professionalization of Adult Basic Education

One of the most difficult tasks any individual or group of individuals may undertake is to have their particular interest or area of study recognized as a profession. To do so denotes a special field of expertise and elevates the field and its practitioners to a level synonymous with the three traditional professions: religion, law and medicine. "Historically, occupations have been measured on the basis of importance and difficulty of tasks that are associated with them" (Gilley and Galbraith, 1987, p. 106).

To aspire to the level of being recognized as a profession assumes that the person or persons associated with the field have met or will meet the responsibilities concomitant with the acquisition of such recognition. These responsibilities are not to be taken lightly nor should they be construed as merely a superficial means to achieve respect in an already crowded arena of "pretentious" professions. "Today, occupational classifications include professional, semiprofessional, paraprofessional, skilled and unskilled . . . the difference between classifications of occupations is not the elements of service, but in the nature of service. In addition, the growth of service occupations and the popular generalization that occupations are becoming professionalized indicates that [sic] research is necessary to determine the

components of the professionalization process and their relationships to one another" (Gilley and Galbraith, 1987, p. 106).

The term profession, according to Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary, is defined as "a vocation requiring knowledge of some department or science; *i.e., the profession of teaching*" (1989, p. 1148). A well-defined body of knowledge is just the beginning, as specific requirements for entry level applicants is also vital to the formation of a structure of a profession. There must also be a body or organization in place to create and implement certain standards of practice and member conduct. This is often the first step leading to professional certification, which generally assumes a certain level of uniform performance. Furthermore, this body must be able to sanction members who fail to adhere to these prescribed standards.

A mechanism or infrastructure must be constructed in order to assure these matters are attended in an orderly and judicious manner. This infrastructure not only helps to assure the members of the organization but gains the trust and confidence of the public that a well-organized body is regulating its conduct as well as that of the respective members. This entity may also provide a platform for the "airing" of perceived grievances and their possible resolution in a timely and orderly manner. This collective of

knowledgeable individuals should spur debate and generate research to address new issues and innovative approaches to old problems. The dynamics of the group is what facilitates its growth and engenders the loyalty necessary to the enhancement of the profession.

Unfortunately the field of adult education is suffering from an identity crisis. Query the "average" person on the street and the reply is most often: "You teach people to read, right?" According to Gilley and Galbraith (1988), "The marginality of adult education as well as numerous other constraining characteristics prevents the field from identifying what and who we are as a discipline and as field of operation" (p. 11). Susan E. Foster addressed many of the problems facing adult education in a 1988 background paper prepared for the Southport Institute for Policy Analysis. In this paper she listed the following structural problems:

1. **The Field of Adult Literacy Lacks a Common Orientation and a Common Basis of Knowledge Rooted in Basic and Applied Research and Experience.**

2. **Most Literacy Programs Do Not Have Quality Standards for What Happens in the Classroom.**

3. **Literacy Programs Are Low Budget Operations with Limited Funds for Staff Development and Training, Instructional Materials and Self-evaluation.**

4. **Compensation Levels for Adult Literacy Program Staff Are Lower than in Comparable Fields of Education and No Career Path Exists for Advancement.**

5. **Administrative Staff in the Field of Adult Literacy Frequently Devote only Part-time to Literacy Programs.**

6. **Adult Literacy Programs Suffer from a Limited Network for Information Sharing.**

7. **Literacy Enhancement Programs Are Often Generic in Nature Rather than Directed to a Specific and Quantifiable Goal Shared by the Learner (p. 13).**

Foster (1988) states that, "Literacy programs lack the infrastructure to support the advancement of the skills of the literacy staff. There are no incentives built into the existing system of service provision to advance the state of the art. Consequently, each institutional approach to literacy enhancement builds upon itself without serious questioning, overemphasizes its successes and struggles to provide more of the same with limited resources" (p. 15).

The key to Foster's argument is the underlying assumption that adult literacy is the "bastard" of the education system. It is "isolated from the mainstream, deprived of adequate resources for healthy growth and development and as currently structured with limited hope for the future" (Foster, 1988, p. 16). This is not, however, a requiem for adult literacy. While the

patient is in critical condition, the possibility for a recovery exists if the educational parent realizes that all its children require equal sustenance.

Foster provides a list of possible remedies in order to facilitate the recovery of adult literacy. These treatments are ensconced in quality standards grouped into four categories: 1) Standards Related to What Should Be Taught 2) Standards Related to Who Will Be Taught 3) Standards Related to Methods and Techniques 4) Standards Related to Assessment and Evaluation.

The most salient topic included in the first category is that the literacy staff should be well versed in the "portable skills" approach to literacy enhancement. This is defined as being based upon "the assumption that being literate in today's society is not just a function of ability to encode or decode or perform separate and discrete tasks, but is rather a function of problem-solving or information processing skills" (Foster, 1988, p. 18). She buttresses this approach by citing an assessment instrument--referred to as the National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP)--rather than utilizing a program design. While Foster does not openly condemn the traditional or competency- based approaches, she does note their limited ability to enhance adult learning. The NAEP primarily focuses upon three areas of literacy:

Prose Literacy, Document Literacy and Quantitative Literacy. All three of these areas are predicated upon imparting portable skills in a functional context.

In relation to the second category of who will be taught, "Literacy staff should be skilled in taking into account the particular needs, problems and life circumstances of the learner in tailoring literacy enhancement programs to meet individual needs . . . [they] should demonstrate a cultural awareness and appreciation of the backgrounds and ethnicity of learners. . . . [keeping in mind] their approach to adult learning is responsive to adult goals, not derivative of the way we tend to teach children" (Foster, 1988, p. 20).

The third category dealing with methods and techniques is the same tired song versed around the staff being conversant with a plethora of methods and techniques, with one twist. She quotes David Harman: "If a century of debate has not produced a conclusive decision about the best teaching method, perhaps we are asking the wrong question?" (1988, p. 20). This presents the obvious fact that the key to their success may lie in other factors--"factors such as motivation of the learner, a clear relationship between the personal goals of the learner and the goal of the program, a

supportive learning environment, or a clear relationship of the subject matter being taught to its utility in other life situations" (Foster, 1988, p. 21).

The fourth and final category of assessment and evaluation holds the literacy staff accountable for locating an individual on the literacy continuum and selecting the appropriate measurement tool for evaluating their progress toward their individual goal. Foster (1988) firmly believes that the adherence to these standards will be a significant step "toward the building of a common framework for the advancement of the profession" (p. 22).

Having suggested the common framework for her infrastructure, it is appropriate to reveal Foster's blueprint for the actual construction. She proposes the following actions:

1. **Exert Leadership at all Levels of Government, the Private and Voluntary Sectors to Change the Rhetoric of Adult Literacy.**

2. **Reorient all Existing Adult Literacy Programs to Quality Standards.**

3. **Build Requirements for Pre-service and In-service Training into Federal, State and Local Grant Proposals.**

4. **Designate the States as the Responsible Entities for Assuring that Literacy Staff Have Received Instruction in the State of the Art and Have Demonstrated Proficiency in Each of the Areas.**

5. **Provide Federal Support for the Development of State Staff Development Training and Information Dissemination Centers for Adult Literacy in Each State.**

6. **Encourage State University Systems to Develop Programs in Adult Literacy.**

7. **Strengthen and Support the Development of Existing National Adult Literacy Associations.**

8. **Increase Levels of Compensation for Adult Literacy Staff.**

9. **Create a National Center for Adult Learning.**

10. **Orient All Research and Practice to Accountability in the Field.**

11. **Educate the Public of the Need to Increase Literacy Skills.**

12. **Experiment with Incentive Systems for Individuals to Upgrade their Literacy Skills** (pp. 23-28).

This list is rather comprehensive and each topic contains a great deal of discussion; however, their are several salient points throughout and these should be condensed. It is no longer acceptable to promote the theme that anyone can teach another to be literate. Neither is it acceptable to assume that more elementary and secondary teachers can solve the problem. Staff in all adult literacy programs operating today should be exposed to state-of-the-art knowledge and held accountable for meeting quality standards listed

above. Learning is measured in years rather than weeks or months. Federal programs providing funds that are used for adult literacy should require that responsibility for providing training and assuring competence in meeting these standards be the responsibility of the states. The use of training programs designed for elementary and secondary education systems should be rejected as inadequate. Training programs should be required for paid and volunteer instructional staff and administrative staff. In order to attract and retain high quality personnel, compensation levels must be made competitive with those in other related parts of the economy. A necessary condition to creating and advancing a profession is providing competitive pay and providing the potential for increased remuneration as skills are advanced. "Certification in elementary and secondary education should not be sufficient grounds for approval as an adult literacy instructor or administrator" [emphasis added] (Foster, 1988, p. 25).

The matter of certification has been mentioned as an integral part of the topic of professionalization, but requires some discussion at this point. Gilley and Galbraith (1987) view certification as "a vital mechanism in the evolutionary process of professionalization because it focuses attention upon the vital competencies which constitute an occupation" (p. 106). It is readily

apparent from the previous discussion of Foster's work that she obviously favors certification. However, not everyone is supportive of certification as Gilley and Galbraith note in an article written for Lifelong Learning in 1985.

They cite W. James as indicating that adult education was too diverse to implement a certification program. She stated that, "certification is merely an empty promise (James, 1981)" (Gilley and Galbraith, 1985, p. 13).. However, since James did not accurately define certification or address the developmental process of a profession, according to Gilley and Galbraith, the wisdom of this statement is questionable. To further rebut this opinion, Gilley (1985) "surveyed 70 associations which maintained certification programs. He found that 93 percent of the associations identified that the primary purpose of certification is to increase/assure professional competence" (p. 13).

Ralph Brockett (1992), in an article on mandatory continuing education for New Directions For Adult and Continuing Education, stated that "we can mandate participation, but we cannot make an individual learn" (p. 90). While this is quite evident, would he extend this argument to the detriment of his profession? Certainly, he would advance the argument of voluntarism,

but those who choose a profession realize the innate responsibilities concomitant with the acceptance of their position in society.

The state of Mississippi has a great deal of work ahead if it desires to enter the business of educating adults. While there are certain girders of an organization in place, the structure resembles the work of an impressionist rather than the careful design of an architect. The blueprint for the creation of a state infrastructure is readily available as is the necessary commitment for success. It is a matter of realizing that all citizens of Mississippi are entitled to an education, not just those under the age of 18. Funding equity is a necessity for the economic survival of Mississippi. A literate workforce is an employed workforce, and employed voters pay taxes as well as return visionary incumbents to the comforts of their office.

References

The Adult Education Program Annual Report. (1990). Virginia: National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium.

Brockett, R. G. (1992). Do we really need mandatory continuing education? New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 54, 87-93.

Cosby, A. G., Howell, F. M., Carr, J. C., & Miller, L. A. (1991). The Mississippi statistical abstract. Starkville: Division of Research, College of Business and Industry, Mississippi State University.

Foster, S. E. (1988). Professionalization of the adult literacy workforce. Southport, Connecticut: Southport Institute for Policy Analysis. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 302 680)

Galbraith, M. W. (1987). Certification would advance professional practice. Lifelong Learning, 11(2), 15, 18.

Galbraith, M. W., & Gilley, J. W. (1985). An examination of professional certification. Lifelong Learning, 9(2), 12-15.

Gilley, J. W., & Galbraith, M. W. (1988). Commonalities and characteristics of professional certification: Implications for adult education. Lifelong Learning, 12(1), 11-15.

Gilley, J. W., & Galbraith, M. W. (1987, May). Professionalization and professional certification: A relationship. Paper presented at the Adult Education Research Conference, University of Wyoming. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 283 936)

Gordon, M. (January 14, 1993). Experts cite need for educated work force for boost in economy. The Clarion-Ledger, p. 4B.

Harman, D. (1987). Illiteracy: a national dilemma. New York: Cambridge Book Co.

Hirsch, E. D., Jr. (1988). Cultural Literacy. New York: Vintage Books.

Lindeman, E. (1926). The meaning of adult education. New York: New Republic, Inc.

Kirsch, I. & Jungeblut, A. (1986). Literacy: Profiles of America's young adults. Report No. 16-PL-02. Princeton: Educational Testing Service.

Mississippi Literary Assessment. (1991). Starkville: Social Science Research Center, Mississippi State University.

Ragland, L. (January 14, 1993). Economy tied to education, environment. The Clarion-Ledger, p. 4B.

United States Department of Education. Adult secondary education: An essential link. (April 1992). Adult Learning & Literacy, 4(2).

Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary. (1989). Avenel, NJ: Gramercy Books.

Woods & Poole Economics. (1991). 1991 State Profile. Washington, D.C.

APPENDIX A

YEARS OF FORMAL SCHOOL COMPLETED

1990 CENSUS

COUNTY	POPULATION AGE 25 +	YEARS OF FORMAL SCHOOL COMPLETED			
		0–8 YEARS	9–11 YEARS	TOTAL < HIGH SCHOOL	PERCENT < HIGH SCHOOL
ADAMS	22,376	3,619	3,702	7,321	32.7
ALCORN	20,746	4,443	4,627	9,070	43.7
AMITE	8,224	1,766	1,762	3,528	42.9
ATTALA	11,741	2,431	3,270	5,701	48.6
BENTON	4,843	1,301	1,294	2,595	53.6
BOLIVAR	21,777	5,247	4,577	9,824	45.1
CALHOUN	9,453	1,913	2,551	4,464	47.2
CARROLL	5,775	1,332	1,324	2,656	50.0
CHICKASAW	10,861	2,073	3,038	5,111	47.1
CHOCTAW	5,558	1,020	1,337	2,357	42.4
CLAIBORNE	5,432	1,061	1,182	2,243	41.3
CLARKE	10,624	1,923	2,155	4,078	38.4
CLAY	12,282	2,059	2,808	4,867	39.6
COAHOMA	17,510	4,228	3,828	8,056	46.0
COPIAH	15,962	2,698	3,504	6,202	38.9
COVINGTON	9,687	1,813	2,494	4,307	44.5
DESOTO	41,533	4,556	7,387	11,943	28.8
FORREST	38,761	4,343	6,490	10,833	27.9
FRANKLIN	5,233	1,036	1,156	2,192	41.9
GEORGE	9,846	1,750	2,302	4,052	41.2
GREENE	6,137	1,055	1,252	2,307	38.0
GRENADA	13,252	2,685	3,075	5,760	43.5
HANCOCK	20,398	2,636	3,894	6,530	32.0
HARRISON	99,878	9,582	15,644	25,226	25.3
HINDS	153,310	14,236	23,736	37,972	24.8
HOLMES	11,623	2,982	3,057	6,039	52.0
HUMPHREYS	6,605	1,906	1,636	3,542	53.6
ISSAQUENA	1,099	338	281	619	56.3
ITAWAMBA	12,807	2,987	3,547	6,534	51.0
JACKSON	69,935	6,453	11,456	17,909	25.6
JASPER	10,292	1,748	2,366	4,114	40.0
JEFFERSON	4,729	1,160	1,063	2,223	47.0
JEFFERSON–DAVIS	8,267	1,505	2,016	3,521	42.6
JONES	39,024	5,717	8,217	13,934	35.7
KEMPER	6,182	1,276	1,426	2,702	43.7
LAFAYETTE	16,387	2,242	2,644	4,886	29.8
LAMAR	18,151	1,872	2,971	4,843	26.7

1990 CENSUS

COUNTY	POPULATION AGE 25 +	YEARS OF FORMAL SCHOOL COMPLETED			
		0-8 YEARS	9-11 YEARS	TOTAL < HIGH SCHOOL	PERCENT < HIGH SCHOOL
LAUDERDALE	46,312	5,406	8,618	14,024	30.3
LAWRENCE	7,564	1,328	1,556	2,884	38.1
LEAKE	11,543	2,319	2,953	5,272	45.7
LEE	40,775	5,277	7,837	13,114	32.2
LEFLORE	20,941	4,930	4,436	9,366	44.7
LINCOLN	19,095	2,767	4,295	7,062	37.0
LOWNES	34,439	4,359	6,326	10,685	34.4
MADISON	32,164	4,285	4,871	9,156	28.5
MARION	15,450	2,892	3,480	6,372	41.2
MARSHALL	17,629	3,968	4,539	8,507	48.3
MONROE	22,351	4,490	5,425	9,915	44.4
MONTGOMERY	7,718	1,452	1,898	3,350	43.4
NESHOBA	15,137	2,572	3,341	5,913	39.1
NEWTON	12,426	2,011	2,947	4,958	39.9
NOXUBEE	7,064	1,840	1,718	3,558	50.4
OKTIBBEHA	18,826	2,092	2,985	5,077	27.0
PANOLA	17,281	3,772	4,121	7,893	45.7
PEARL RIVER	23,589	2,978	4,486	7,464	31.6
PERRY	6,419	1,040	1,412	2,452	38.2
PIKE	22,164	3,806	4,922	8,728	39.4
PONTOTOC	13,954	2,471	3,469	5,940	42.6
PRENTISS	14,374	2,984	3,784	6,768	47.1
QUITMAN	5,948	1,738	1,503	3,241	54.5
RANKIN	55,365	5,569	8,911	14,480	26.2
SCOTT	14,444	2,784	3,992	6,776	46.9
SHARKEY	3,672	995	793	1,788	48.7
SIMPSON	14,782	2,676	3,536	6,212	42.0
SMITH	9,164	1,678	2,259	3,937	43.0
STONE	6,324	769	1,248	2,017	31.9
SUNFLOWER	18,299	4,762	4,532	9,294	50.8
TALLAHATCHIE	8,575	2,479	1,964	4,443	51.8
TATE	12,553	2,182	2,717	4,899	39.0
TIPPAH	12,156	2,678	2,864	5,542	45.6
TISHOMINGO	11,803	2,703	2,613	5,316	45.0
TUNICA	4,110	1,226	999	2,225	54.1
UNION	14,114	2,772	3,250	6,022	42.7
WALTHALL	8,466	1,669	2,140	3,809	45.0

1990 CENSUS					
		YEARS OF FORMAL SCHOOL COMPLETED			
COUNTY	POPULATION AGE 25 +	0–8 YEARS	9–11 YEARS	TOTAL < HIGH SCHOOL	PERCENT < HIGH SCHOOL
WARREN	29,311	3,999	5,483	9,482	32.3
WASHINGTON	37,954	7,613	8,031	15,644	41.2
WAYNE	11,588	2,136	2,951	5,087	43.9
WEBSTER	6,464	1,284	1,390	2,674	41.4
WILKINSON	5,811	1,734	1,272	3,006	51.7
WINSTON	11,937	1,849	3,039	4,888	40.9
YALOBUSHA	7,666	1,729	1,669	3,398	44.3
YAZOO	14,976	3,212	3,774	6,986	46.6
TOTALS:	1,538,997	240,267	309,418	549,685	35.7